

**Maryland Partnership for Children in Nature**  
**Meeting Notes**  
**9/26/08**

**Participants:**

Eric Schwaab	Nancy Grasmick
Rebecca Bell	Coleen Seremet
John Quinn	Rochelle Slutskin
Mark Herzog	Mel Parker
Tracey Bowen	Jackie Carrera
Jeff Horan	Pat Delany
Scott Raymond	Cornelius Jones
Esther Parker	Heather White
Alan Hance	Bill McDonald
Gabriel Albornoz	Ansu John
Don Baugh	Sarah Haines
Bob Duly	Nita Settina
Elena Takaki	Peyton Taylor
Cathy Shanks	Claudia Donegan
Rebecca Beecroft, NBCT	

Notes recorded by: Steve McCoy

**MEETING AGENDA**

- I. Welcome
- II. Review of last meeting
- III. Children in Nature & Environmental Education Websites
- IV. Community and Public Lands Workgroup Report
- V. Environmental Literacy Workgroup Report
- VI. Review NAAEE Environmental Literacy document
- VII. Discussion: Measuring baseline data and increase time spent in nature by children.

**NOTES:**

- I. Dr. Coleen Seremet discussed the priorities of the MSDE Division of Instruction
  - Division of Instruction will concentrate on two priorities
    - STEM – Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics
      - Ready students for highly technological professional jobs
      - Trans-disciplinary curriculum work
      - Infusion of instructional technology
    - Teacher Professional Development
      - 135-140 languages spoken in Maryland classrooms
      - Tremendous challenges for educators
      - Integrating critical thinking/problem solving
  - Supporting teachers in Environmental Education
    - Teacher Tool Kits
      - Beginning seeds of lessons
    - Environmental engineering stressed

- Teacher workshops are plenty and can be overwhelming
    - Define and build capacity around high quality professional development.
    - Tools available on the MD K-12 web site.
  - Voluntary State Curriculum (VSC) is best way to insert Environmental Literacy into the state curriculum
  - Important to gather baseline data on where we are – gap analysis
  - All 24 school districts have a watershed experience.
  - There is still work to be done.
- II. Eric Schwaab (attending for DNR Secretary John Griffin) reviewed last meeting and gave updates.
- We are off to a great start.
  - Congressman Sarbanes' NCLI legislation passed – 294 yes/108 no.
  - Heather White (NWF) stressed the importance of public involvement in our process.
- III. Elena Takaki and Rebecca Bell reviewed the DNR Children in Nature and MSDE Environmental Education web sites.
- Our audience is too big for a small group to connect – web sites are critical to share information
  - There is a need for the public to respond to the web site.
  - Need to include information for other child care and informal educators (80,000 children in before/after school programs in MD)
  - MSDE Web site started out as a resource for educators
  - Environmental Education Tool Kits have been added
  - Web site to include a School Yard Habitat discussion
- IV. Jeff Horan introduced the two work groups
- The Partnership is designed to work at the CEO level with work groups carrying out the tasks.
  - Workgroups are open to Partnership members
  - The workgroups need to be inclusive
  - There is a need to explore new ways to continue to vet our work
  - Need the engagement of many people
- V. Community and Public Lands Workgroup
- Tracey Bowen and Jackie Carrera presented the Scope of Work and Timeline for the workgroup.
  - The NCLI Coalition survey can provide valuable public input
  - MSDE can provide great support in assessment
  - Dr. Grasmick will ask Gary Heath to participate
- VI. Environmental Literacy Workgroup
- Mark Herzog presented the Scope of work for the workgroup.
  - Workgroup is not just for teachers. Need input and engagement from other professionals.
  - Concern was expressed over the necessity to reach out to outlying counties.
  - Must be sensitive to ethnic/racial/geographic diversity

VII. NAAEE Environmental Literacy Plan

- Environmental Literacy workgroup looking to meld the two plans together

VIII. Gathering baseline data

- Elena Takaki distributed a draft document to guide discussion
- Data must be statistically valid
- Partnership asked to review document for next meeting.